

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSC-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /052 W
-----065415 011409Z /47/43

O P 311543Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8684
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
COMICEDEFOR KEFLAVIK IC PRIORITY
USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA PRIORITY
CINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 REYKJAVIK 1160

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. BQQYTWC GDS
TAGS: PINT, IC
SUBJECT: NEW GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED

REF: REYKJAVIK 1155 DTG 311333Z AUG 78 (NOTAL)

1. PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PP) CHAIRMAN OLAFUR JOHANNESSEN MET
WITH PRESIDENT ELDJARN THIS MORNING (AUGUST 31) AND ANNOUNCED
HE HAD FORMED OOALITION AMONG PP, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY
(SDP), AND PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE (PA) WHICH WILL TAKE OFFICE
3 P.M., SEPTEMBER 1. MEMBERS OF CABINET AS FOLLOWS:

PRIME MINISTER OLAFUR JOHANNESSEN -- PP CHAIRMAN, 65;
PRIME MINISTER IN 1971-74 LEFT GOVERNMENT; MINISTER OF JUSTICE,
COMMERCE, AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS 1974-78; MP SINCE 1959;
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LAWYER BY TRAINING; REPRESENTS MODERATE/CONSERVATIVE
WING OF PP; FRIENDLY TOWARD US AND SUPPORTER OF NATO
MEMBERSHIP ALTHOUGH "COD WAR" DAMAGED HIS COMMITMENT TO
BOTH; BELIEVES THAT ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE (DF) SHOULD BE
WITHDRAWN WHEN CONDITIONS PERMIT.

MINISTER OF JUSTICE, EGRUCULTURE, AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

STEINGRIMUR HERMANNSSON -- PP SECRETARY, 50; MP SINCE 1971; TRAINED AS ENGINEER AT ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND CAL TECH; DIVORCED FROM FIRST WIFE (AMERICAN CITIZEN AS ARE THREE CHILDREN OF THAT MARRIAGE), AND REMARRIED; DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL SINCE 1958; SONE OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER HERMANN JONASSON; PRO-US AND PRO-NATO ALTHOUGH HAS BEEN SOMETIME CRITIC OF IDF; FAVORS LOWER PROFILE FOR IDF AND GREATER ICELANDIC PARTICIPATION IN DEFENSE FORCE ACTIVITIES.

MINISTER OF FINANCE TOMAS ARNASON - PP TREASURER, 55; MP SINCE 1974; TRAINED AS LAWYER INCLUDING STUDY AT HARVARD UNDER PL 402 PROGRAM; FORMER HEAD OF DEFENSE DIVISION OF MFA AND CHAIRED ICELANDIC SIDE OF US-ICELANDIC DEFENSE COUNCIL; BROTHER IS CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF ICELAND PRIME CONTRACTOR AT NATO BASE; STRONGLY PRO-US AND PRO-NATO AND IS ONE OF LEADING PP SPOKESMEN AGAINST EARLY WITHDRAWAL OF IDF; HE LIKE OTHERS IN PARTY, HAVE ADVOCATED MODIFICATION OF IDF ACTIVITIES TO GIVE ICELANDERS GREATER ROLE.

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BENEDIKT GRONDAL - SDP CHAIRMAN, 54; MP SINCE 1956; JOURNALIST BY PROFESSION; STUDIED AT HARVARD; LONG ACTIVE IN SDP POLITICS AND CHAIRMAN SINCE 1974 ALTHOUGH NOT REGARDED AS STRONG LEADER; FIRMLY PRO-US AND PRO-NATO; ALTHOUGH HE CALLED FOR LOWERED PROFILE FOR IDF IN 1973, THIS WAS REGARDED AS POLITICAL MOVE AND NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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REFLECTIVE OF HIS FEELINGS FAVORING IDF PRESENCE; SINCE THEN HE HAS BEEN OUTSPOKEN IN HIS COMMITMENT TO CONTINUATION OF IDF PRESENCE ON PRESENT BASIS FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

MINISTER OF FISHERIES KIARTAN JOHANNSSON - SDP VICE CHAIRMAN, 38; FIRST ELECTED TO ALTHING 1978; TRAINED AS ENGINEER INCLUDING STUDY AT ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY; WORKED AS ENGINEER AND ECONOMICS INSTRUCTOR AT UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND; WENT THROUGH "LEFTIST PHASE" IN EARLIER YEARS BUT IS NOW FIRMLY PRO-US AND PRO-IDF; SUPPORTS GREATER ICELANDIC AWARENESS OF DEFENSE AFFAIRS AND FEELS ICELANDERS SHOULD TAKE GREATER PART IN THEIR OWN SECURITY BUT OPPOSES MAJOR CHANGES TO PRESENT DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS.

MINISTER OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SECURITY, AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS MAGNUS MAGNUSSON - SDP, 55; STUDIED RADIO TELEGRAPHY AND COMMUNICATIONS; FIRST ELECTED TO ALTHING 1978; WORKED AS SEAMAN AND AS ICELANDIC POST AND TELEGRAPH EMPLOYEE; MAYOR OF WESTMAN ISLANDS 1966-75; ANTI-COMMUNIST; CONSIDERED TO BE NATO SUPPORTER ALTHOUGH HAS NOT SPOKEN OUT ON DEFENSE MATTERS.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS RAGNAR ARNALDS -
CHAIRMAN OF PA PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, 40; TEACHER AND
LAWYER; MP SINCE 1971; STUDIED IN SWEDEN; MOTHER WAS
RADICAL LEFTIST, FATHER CONSERVATIVE; ACTIVE IN LEFTIST
CAUSES FROM HIS YOUTH; FORMERLY ACTIVE IN ORGANIZATION OF
MILITARY STATION OPPONENTS ALTHOUGH HAS NOT HAD MAJOR
ROLE IN ITS ACTIVITIES FOR NUMBER OF YEARS; NOT CONSIDERED
COMMUNIST BUT LEFTIST SUPPORTER OF SOCIALIST CAUSES AND
"SOCIAL JUSTICE;" A MODERATE BY PA STANDARDS WHO HAS MAINTAINED
LOW PROFILE, EVEN DURING YEARS AS PARTY CHAIRMAN, 1968-77;
NOT SEEN AS VERY INFLUENTIAL WITHIN PARTY.

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O P 311543Z AUG 78
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 REYKJAVIK 1160

MINISTER OF COMMERCE SVAVAR GESTSSON - PA, 34; JOURNALIST;
FIRST ELECTED TO ALTHING 1978; JOINED RADICAL YOUTH GROUP
OF SOCIALIST PARTY AS TEENAGER; CONSIDERED TO BE ONLY
COMMUNIST IN CABINET; ACTIVE IN ORGANIZATION OF MILITARY
STATION OPPONENTS; WAS REPORTER AND THEN EDITOR OF PA
DAILY THJODVILJINN; SERVED IN ICELAND'S UN DELEGATION IN
1976; ANTI-US AND HARD-LINE OPPONENT OF ICELAND'S
MEMBERSHIP IN NATO.

MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES HJORLEIFUR GUTTORMSSON - PA, 42;
TEACHER AND BIOLOGIST; FIRST ELECTED TO ALTHING 1978;
STUDIED IN EAST GERMANY AND HAS GERMAN WIFE; ACTIVE IN PA

POLITICS SINCE 1965; SELF-DESCRIBED SOCIALIST; ARDENT
NATIONALIST WHO OBJECTS TO ICELAND'S DEFENSE POLICY AS
OUT OF KEEPING WITH CURRENT WORLD SITUATION.

ALL MEMBERS OF CABINET ARE MARRIED AND SPEAK ENGLISH.
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FURTHER BIO INFORMATION BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT.
BLAKE

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Message Attributes

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